

Looking ahead: Rick Inatome, CEO of Inacom Corp. of Troy, (left) and Fred Marx, owner of a marketing, public relations and management development firm in Farmington Hills, said the way to survive change in the '90s is to be flexible.



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## Stay flexible in market, speakers say

**By CHRIS MCCOSKY**  
STAFF WRITER

Forget about job security. Start thinking instead about how to change, be flexible, develop new attitudes and start building success rather than building a career. That's the message Rick Inatome, Troy business owner, delivered to journalists, managers and corporate executives of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

"Job security will never be the same, never like it was 20 years ago," said Inatome, CEO of the Inacom Computer Co., who, along with public relations and marketing expert Fred Marx, were the featured speakers at the 11th

annual Observer & Eccentric Journalist of the Year program Thursday in the Southfield Radisson Hotel.

"For the next decade and a half, we might as well call it job insecurity."

Inatome, who along with his father, Joseph, founded Inacom Computers and Computer Mart on \$35,000 in 1976 and built it into a multi-million dollar corporation, is considered a guru in the computer industry. Newsweek proclaimed him "one of the few super-dealers who helped shape the industry."

He masterminded the merger between Inacom and ValCom

Inc. in 1991 to create one of the largest computer resellers in the industry.

Marx, who founded in 1985 Marx Layno & Company, a marketing, public relations and management development firm in Farmington Hills, has nearly 30 years experience in retail. He's held vice president's positions with Jacobson's, Macy's and Hudson's.

The topic under discussion was trends in business and technology, but the message — a warning, really — that both Inatome and Marx imparted was, "Change or die."

"The notion of the 'Corporate

Man' and building a career is a 1950s notion," Inatome said. "We can't afford career management. We all have to learn to control our own destiny. It is a bit that we all have to go through in the journey to a new economy."

Today's CEO, said Inatome, has the "shelf-life of a cheeseburger." Companies today are thriving and dying in a 24-hour period. Particularly in the computer and retail businesses.

"Of the top 25 (computer) resellers in 1985, only one exists today," he said. "We kind of think of our lives in dog years in

See MARKETPLACE, 17A

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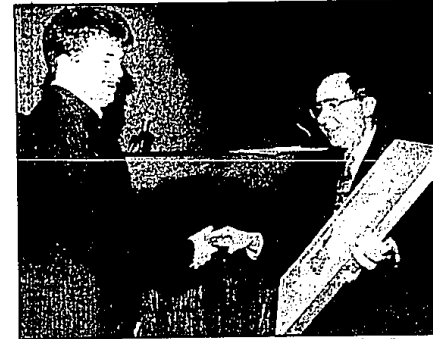
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## Veteran journalist honored by peers



STAFF PHOTOS BY JERRY ZOLYNSKY

Reporter Jay Grossman captured The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers' 1993 Journalist of the Year award.

Grossman, who has covered the Rochester and Troy communities for 4 1/2 years, took home a plaque and a congratulatory stipend in a ceremony last week at the Radisson Hotel in Southfield.

He was cited for his concise, compelling writing style and for his flexibility in covering breaking news.

"Jay cultivates sources well; he knows the ins and outs of the community and its politics; and he's a driving force among the Rochester/Troy staff," said Dave Varga, community editor. "Plus, he's involved well past reporting and writing the story."

Grossman was part of a team that won first-place awards for breaking news and General Excelsior from the Michigan Press Association in 1993. He also captured second place for feature writing. In all, he's won seven

MPA honors.

"Jay epitomizes the kind of journalist we cultivate at the O&E," said Eccentric managing editor Judith Doner Berne. "His stories reflect dedicated reporting, compelling writing and compassion."

"He is the 11th O&E journalist to win this annual award for which it is an honor even to be nominated." Each person is nominated by his peers.

Others nominees are: Darrell Clem, Westland reporter; Alice Collins, Southfield reporter; Doug Funke, O&E business reporter; Tammie Graves, O&E graphic artist; Tim Smith, West Bloomfield reporter; and Keely Wygnok, Taste and Entertainment editor.

A Wayne State University graduate, Grossman graduated from Wayne State University in 1986 after earning WSU's Student of the Year award. He was the 1991 Class B Michigan Chess Champi-

Journalist of the year: Accepting the award as 1994 Journalist of the Year from president of Suburban Communications Richard Aginian is Jay Grossman.

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